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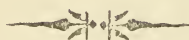
Patriotic and
Promiscuous Poems



BY
Blair Wolf



Patriotic and Promiscuous Poems



By
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Winterset, Iowa

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INTRODUCTION

On the 9th of August, 1862, I enlisted in the United States Volunteer Army,¹ for three years, or during the Civil War. Later our company (G) was assigned to the Thirty-fifth Iowa Volunteer Infantry, whose first camp was on Muscatine Island, near the city of Muscatine, Iowa. While there a number of the soldiers subscribed for the Muscatine Journal. At one time during the following winter several of our regiment were in the General Hospital at Cairo, Illinois, myself among the number. One day one of them asked me if I had seen an article of poetry published in the "Muscatine Journal" and written (by a private of our regiment) on a building at Camp Strong. I had not seen the paper, but asked him if he could repeat any of the lines. After he repeated some of them I told him I had written it while on guard there. No doubt but I would have forgotten the circumstance had it not been called to my mind. I think it was about twenty-four years after the war and while our regimental associations were having their second reunion at Muscatine. I went to the "Journal" office and in the files of November, 1862, I easily found the following items:

Camp Strong, Nov. 14th, 1862.

The following original lines, author unknown, shows that there is a Poet in the ranks. They are recorded on the door post of the Secretary's Office at the entrance of the Fair Grounds. The place is noted for the number of empty clothing boxes, but very little else. A guard is kept there day and night, but what he has to guard is hard to make out. As it is Beat No. 14, of course the new relief does not pass without having a new guard every two hours. As none but privates are placed on the beats, to one of that class belongs the credit, I give it *verbatim*.—

I'll stack my gun and write a line
To show you how I pass the time.
I'm placed here now to guard the door.
And all this *vast amount* of store.

But soon I'll leave for Dixie's Land
And never on this beat I'll stand;
And when I leave this world of grief
I hope to join a new *relief*.

And when the heavenly course I run
Will need no bayonet or gun,
But mingle with the hosts above
Where all is harmony and love.

A large space might be filled with interesting items from the *guard line* that take place by night and by day. When I hear again from the author of the poetry I will let you know.

HENRY.

I think the principal of the High School in my native place (Marlboro, Stark County, Ohio), must have been an enemy to poetry, for he cautioned us severely against any attempt at such composition. Yet his idea might have been to keep us in abeyance until more mature years, and then let the disposition break out of its own accord. At any rate, his advice influenced me for some seven or eight years, until the silent watches of Camp Strong. If No. 14 had been a walking beat instead of an irksome standing one, the muse might have been suppressed indefinitely. Thanks to Henry (or whatever his right name is) for rescuing those few lines from oblivion. Such as they were they were the cause (in after years) of numerous requests from comrades and others for something more from my pen. This caused me to produce something occasionally. I have lost some of my productins though the action of some newspaper reporters who would (after the adjournment of a meeting) be among the first to request copy and after promising faithfully to return it, would never do so. I never wrote for money, but am thankful for the manner in which my efforts have been received; and in this connection I must mention a circumstance of the Spanish-American War. I was then living at Tipton, Cedar County, Iowa. Tipton and vicinity furnished a great portion of Company F, Firty-ninth Iowa. After suf-

fering the heat of summer and the ravages of disease, the regiment was removed in the fall from the swamps of Jacksonville, Florida to the suburbs of Savannah, Georgia, where they were treated with respect by the people of the city. They were there but a short time before being ordered to Cuba. The troops in Camp at Savannah numbered from fifteen to twenty thousand on Thanksgiving day. But what was that to an army of Savannah ladies who poured out from the city and took the whole camp by surprise, put up tables and loaded them with one of the greatest banquets and profusion of flowers ever known to history. I was requested by the Soldiers' Aid Society of Tipton to thank the ladies of Savannah for the splendid Thanksgiving banquet. The poem sent for this purpose was published in the "Savannah News" and the publisher sent me a copy. Dr. C. Backman (the oldest practicing dentist in Savannah) although then a total stranger to me, also kindly sent me a copy of the paper containing the poem and it was published by our home paper. The kindness of the Doctor and Mrs. Backman brought about a very happy correspondence between our families and when I sent a poem on "The Vacant Room of Our Soldier Boy" the Doctor had it published and answered by a poet friend of his, whose poetry expressed sympathy and hope for the safe return of our boy. After the regiment returned from Cuba the Doctor sought our son and entertained him at his home and when he was sick in the hospital, both he and his estimable wife carried baskets of nourishment and tried to prevail on him to accept the hospitality of their home until he became well. Long and happy life to our southern friends, and the same to "Henry" if living, and I will be very thankful to any of my readers if they can put me on his track, for the "Journal" force could not give me his proper name or place of residence. If dead, I want to know it, and say peace to his soul, and if living I want to thank him for what he has done for me and request permission to write his epitaph. And now, gentle reader, whatever appreciation you may have for my productions please remember that the influence of "Henry" was in no small degree back of it all. And now as I send the portion of

my patriotic and promiscuous poems contained in this small volume on its mission, I hope you will not criticise, but charitably ascribe to it, whatever consideration and merit it deserves. Those of the Thirty-fifth Iowa who are poetically inclined can see that I have taken no title upon myself, but in justice to them can say that the circumstances here narrated are solely responsible for your humble servant being called the poet of the Thirty-Fifth Iowa.

Blair Wolf. —

PATRIOTIC POEMS

* * *

THE SOLDIER

In times of old, when kings were crowned
And courtiers danced their giddy round,
And monarchs held supreme control
And worldly power was their goal,
Who were the men placed at the helm
To guard and keep the conquered realm
To execute what e'er was planned
And guard with safety all the land?
The Soldier.

When infant settlements were planned,
And danger lurked on every hand,
Wild beasts, wild men, were waiting there
Crouching, springng from their lair,
Or waiting on some nearby hill
To satiate their greedy will,
Who trod their rounds with weary feet
And gave the people rest and sleep?
The Soldier.

When Uncle Sam wore baby clothes
And Britain in her wrath arose
And taxed the tea and all the stamps
And maybe candlesticks and lamps,
Who were the men among the rest
That always did their very best
To drive oppression from our shore
And stay its progress evermore?
The Soldier.

When England ploughed the mighty main
Across the seas, her wealth to gain,
She claimed the right to search our craft
Then turn around and jest and laugh
And say "A Britain always so"
"Our motto is wher'er we go":
Who brought them down upon all fours
And sent them home to do their chores?
The Soldier.

When Mexico was careless quite
Of all the rules of nations right,
And traced an order on her slate
Her debts she would repudiate,
We brought them to a sudden pause
And taught them to respect our cause,
And yet with all our zeal and zest
Who of our people taught them best?
The Soldier.

When haughty tyrants played their roles
And bought and dealt in human souls,
They claimed the right if they should will
To call their slaves on Bunker Hill,
Another right they all agreed
That from our Union to secede;
Who showed them plainly, one and all,
That all such plans must surely fall?
The Soldier.

When it was thought that haughty Spain
With foul intent blew up the Maine,
And then grew turbulent by spells
And forced our men to prison cells,
And slaughtered Cubans by the scores
Just as they did in former wars,

Who taught them lessons quite intense
And brought them to their sober sense?
The Soldier.

Men may talk both loud and long
With oratory, good and strong,
And bid the common people wait
While they shall guide the Ship of State;
But when the ship gets into danger
From inward foe or pirate stranger,
What is the Captain's last resort
To bring the ship safe into port?
The Soldier.

* * *

RETROSPECTIVE

I often turn back to the year 'Sixty-one
When conflict of slavery with Freedom begun
The thoughts of a moment, results of an age
Are all written out on that wonderful page,

And plainer than pictures that hang on the wall
I see the dark shadows that spread over all;
Disloyal debating, dissention and strife
Are quenching the fountains of national life.

The flag of our country is trampled in dust
The hand of the traitor is wreaking his lust,
The hordes of rebellion from near and afar
Are dealing swift vengeance in pillage and war.

Our country's defenders, the loyal and brave
Are marshalling armies the country to save,
They are leaving their homes and families dear

And hastening onward, their comrades to cheer.

'Mid thunder of battle and carnage and smoke
They smite the oppressor and loosen his yoke,
And the terrible volume is only begun
With defeats and successes as time passes on.

The land is in sorrow, depression and fear
With gloomy forebodings the outgoing year,
Herculean effort the next year was made,
The tide of oppression was hopefully stayed.

But yet in a balance our destinies hung,
And furious engagements that no human tongue
Attempts to relate, but attempts it in vain
The numbers of thousands of wounded and slain.

The third year of carnage, the greatest yet seen
When bloodshed of battle oft crimsoned the green,
The heaviest engagements the world ever knew
And stubborn rebellion was severed in two.

Vicksburgh has fallen and Gettysburgh won
The dark clouds are yielding a glimpse of the sun,
The loyal are hopeful and firm in their cause
Unyielding in justice, maintaining the laws.

The fourth year of sorrow and some months beside
Saw victory sail in at the flow of the tide;
Our land forces gathered at beat of the drum
The living returned unto kindred and home.

But Oh! the bright lives that went out in the storm
That spread o'er the nation in death-dealing form
How often remembered in silence and tears,
Through all of the seasons of swift passing years.

Tall statues of marble can never impart

A balm for the anguish and aching of heart
That is felt at the loss of our heroes so brave,
Who gave up their lives, our loved country to save.

Fond memories linger on each passing breeze
That is wafted to us from the Southern seas;
May nature's bright garlands forever entwine
'Round the graves of our fallen in beauty sublime.

Let the foot of the stranger in reverence tread
In each burial place of our own country's dead,
And all of our people as years cycle 'round
Deck the graves of our heroes wherever they're found.

* * *

THE THIRTY-FIFTH IOWA

When the flag of our country was flung to the breeze
And proclaimed a new nation o'er land and o'er seas,
It gave us a birthright for life to possess
The rights of the free in the land of the West.

But when foul rebellion arose in the land
And spread through the Southland from river to strand
The Northland stood firm in upholding the laws
And marshalled its armies to fight in its cause.

And when our great chieftan called yet for still more
The loyal responded from shore unto shore.
Amid that great army, the nation's best gift
Marched in solid column the grand Thirty-Fifth.

Of all none were more hopeful than this band of men
Their number a thousand, their companies ten;
They feared not the hardship, they feared not the strife
To them home and country were dearer than life.

They stood up for justice, they fought for the truth
That loyal battalion of manhood and youth,
To follow their journey through all those dark years
Death, sickness and sorrow and sad weeping tears.

Bereft of the comforts of mother or wife
They die among strangers or fall in the strife.
It would fill a large book that no one could write
Save the God of our battles that watched o'er the fight.

The living pressed onward 'till victory won
And then the march homeward at last was begun;
With glad hearts and joyful as onward they come
To meet friends and kindred and pleasures of home.

Abreast the great river at last they are seen
And steer for the harbor of old Muscatine;
Thronged citizens gather, while hats they uplift
And thrice hearty welcome the old Thirty-Fifth.

Oh! where are they now, those Ten Hundred Men?
Many sleep in the valley, the mountain and glen,
Some are limping along and shattered in health
Some have little to keep them and few are in wealth.

But of all the great favors that fall unto man
Is the joy of our meeting together again,
Leaving business behind us without a regret
Have a Reunion together, we'll never forget.

And when all our cares and our sorrows are o'er
Transportation be furnished to Heaven's bright shore
And the Guardian Angel the wicket will lift
And welcome each boy of the old Thirty-Fifth.

WOMAN AND THE RELIEF CORPS

To all firm believers of that excellent book
Which tells of the fruit that our parents partook,
You find that the man was the first on the ground
And spent most of his time in looking around;

Beheld trees and flowers from stem unto root
But had little knowledge of flavors of fruit,
But when Mother Eve appeared as his spouse
She straightway began to provide for the house.

She gathered some apples, enough to suffice
To bake for their dinner a couple of pies,
She already believed in cooking their food
But Adam was lazy and got her no wood.

He sat in contentment and quoted the law
That all fruits forever should be eaten raw;
That man was well punished since then, you will note
The chunk of raw apple still sticks in his throat.

And by this we prove the original plan
Of woman's creation superior to man.
She helped along when he tended his flocks
And lived in a tent on the mountains and rocks.

And when he became yet more civilized
She helped him to build in the midst of the wilds.
She sailed o'er the breadth of the treacherous main
And stood by his side in the woods and the plain.

She lived in her cabin in danger and dread
And oft gave to others her morsel of bread,
And heard the loud war-whoop of savage wild men
Resound through the forest and echo again;

And between the bright morn and the sunset's red glow

Beheld all she loved in her presence laid low,
And yet never faltered or murmured complaint
No matter how saddened or weary or faint.

She helped to build up all the wealth of the East
In which present people can revel and feast.
She went to the West, as every one knows
In the midst of the prairie she planted the rose.

She came to the Rockies with never a rest
And foot-sore and weary passed over their crest,
And down in the vales of that beautiful land
She planted the orange longside of the palm.

She raised up the children from near and afar
Who made themselves famous in peace and in war.
Whenever our nation was toiling in strife
No heroes were braver than mother and wife.

To help our foefathers their freedom to gain
They molded the bullets that conquered the slain;
They bound up the wounds and they kneaded the bread
On which patriot soldiers were wont to be fed.

When later old England our country assailed
And well for *our* people ingloriously failed,
The power of woman arose in its might
And with her assistance gave strength to the fight.

When dread civil war, this beautiful land
Deluged with blood from ocean to strand
The prayers of our women were ever again
A strength to our armies, the struggle to gain.

They stood by our soldiers in field and in camp
When pallor spread o'er them with pestilence damp,
As sisters of mercy they worked in the rows

Of wounded and dying in hospital clothes.

In these later years, in our contest with Spain
The kindness of woman was present again,
The same gentle touch and the closing of eyes
Of comrades whose spirits had fled to the skies.

The old army veteran bowed in his grief
Gives thanks to his Maker for Woman's Relief
In fighting life's battles though weary and sore
He takes up new courage by help of the Corps.

Go search the world over, no better you'll find
To heal up the wounded in body and mind,
No body of workers throughout all the land
Have ever done better for suffering man.

They come to his aid at the time of his need
With never a thought of his doctrine or creed,
They nurse the good wife and the children caress
And dispel every want in the way that is best.

Now to these good sisters my tribute I bring
And consider them greater than Duchess or King,
For in God's creation to make us more human
He sent us an angel and called it a woman.

* * *

H A R D T A C K

When wrapt in reverie I find
Swift thoughts come thronging on the mind,
I think of days when I was small
And chased with glee my hoop and ball;
Of days of maple syrup saps
And mother's pies and ginger snaps;

Of doughnuts too, there was no lack;
But then we never knew *Hard Tack*.

We had some cares, of course we did
And so does every little kid;
Feet frosted with the winter snow
The stone bruise on the bare-foot toe,
The measles and the whooping cough,
Or sleeping up on some dark loft;
But trials more we had to back
When old enough to eat *Hard Tack*.

But when big boys we grew to be
As comely as you'd wish to see
We brushed our coats and combed our curls
And looked askance at pretty girls;
Sometimes we saw them home from church,
Sometimes they left us in the lurch,
And bade us please to just step back,
With hearts much harder than *Hard Tack*.

But darker days have come to all
When haughty pride must have a fall;
The rising storm is seen afar
As onward comes the march of war,
And maiden, mother, wife shall weep
And silent dreary vigils keep
And scarcely for a moment lack
To think of those who eat *Hard Tack*.

For lover, brother, husband, now
Have registered a solemn vow
To live or die, as chance may be
For equal rights and liberty,
Down at the front they march along
And mingle with the mighty throng,

Each hoping he may soon come back
And throw away his old *Hard Tack*.

Sometimes plenty, often less,
Sometimes nothing in the mess,
Ofttimes supperless to bed
With leaking sky all overhead,
Nothing for soldiers to admire
When out of food and out of fire
But rest upon their haversack
And dream 'tis filled with good *Hard Tack*.

The weary march, the battles roar
Comes to the memory o'er and o'er.
The dead and dying wounded all
Commingle in one funeral pall;
You see it all down through the years
And oft your eyes are dimmed with tears;
Those by-gone days, they all come back
When comrades shared their last *Hard Tack*.

Brave heroes sleep in southern soil
Away from all life's busy toil,
While some are living good and true
As in the days they wore the blue;
Their scattering locks are turning gray
And all, too soon must pass away.
Good people all let nothing lack
To those who once could eat *Hard Tack*.

* * *

CAMP STRONG

Who named Camp Strong I cannot tell
But he who did it, did it well,

And looking back I often think
Of some strong things we had to drink.

Strong water first and very bad
To drink the the same would make you sad,
Strong coffee too, and taste of rust
Mixed in with sand and island dust;

And to this day we all agree
'Twas there we drank our strongest tea,
And worse than tea was sometimes found
By thirsty boys who ran up town.

The camp was by the river side
O'erflown at time of highest tide,
And from the city could be seen
Just down below old Muscatine.

A sickly place 'twas surely true,
For when the fog raised o'er the slough
And spread abroad its mantle rife
You'd almost cut it with a knife.

A passing breeze the clouds would shift
And there behold the *Thirty-Fifth*,
Their shanties stood ten all abreast
And formed the row the farthest west.

Then turning left and passing north
We viewed with pride the *Twenty-Fourth*,
The boys who donned their suits of blue
While our own knees were sticking through.

They left us one October day
And down the river made their way,
And in their place the Graybeards came
And took their quarters just the same.

Some weeks together then we passed,
Until our orders came at last,
We left the camp and took the car
And off we started for the war.

The Graybeards finished up the camp
Before they started on the tramp,
They were the last of all the throng
That ever tarried in Camp Strong.

The young, the old, the brave, the gay,
Came in and out and went their way;
A few yet on life's billows tossed
While many more the stream have crossed.

Now in our fast declining years
Come let us hear your hopes and fears;
Just "*grab a root*" and come along
And let us hear of old Camp Strong.

* * *

THE WOMEN OF MUSCATINE

There is many a gem worth keeping
Produced from countries afar
But better than these are fond memories
Reflected from days of the war.
You may travel this wide world all over
And tell us all you have seen,
But you never will change our opinion
Of the ladies of Muscatine.

Not alone of those in the city
Do I wish to speak of in praise,
But the women of all the county
Who lived in the perilous days

The days of the Southern Rebellion
And all of the years between
The loyal true-hearted devotion
Of the women of Muscatine.

Always ready for every occasion,
And eager and willing to do
Anything for the pleasure and comfort
Of the chivalrous "boys in blue",
And when we were sick and suffering
Or felt the pangs of adversity keen,
None more ready to offer assistance
Than the ladies of Muscatine.

Then all of ye "Thirty-Fifth" soldiers
No matter wherever you roam,
Come down to the beautiful city
The city we call our home;
And never forget the ladies
But keep their memory green;
Three cheers for the army and navy
And the women of Muscatine.

* * *

THE MISSING

When the days of foul rebellion
Cursed our land from gulf to shore,
Then it was that hearts knew sorrow
That they never knew before.

Grandparents old and feeble
Pondered all the live-long day
At the thoughts that friends and kindred
Must be counted in the fray.

But the parents grief was greater
As they gave their willing sons,
And the while it seemed the harder
When they sent their only ones.

And the noble wife and mother
Could but wring her hands and pray,
As she saw her husband father
Kiss good-bye and march away.

Then the kind and loving sisters
Must give up their ~~both~~ers too,
For they know their country's calling
For the good, the brave, the true.

To the young and lovely maiden
All the future seemed so dark
When from out their pleasant sunshine
Her fond lover must depart.

Fond adieus from friends and kindred
Were repeated o'er and o'er
And our country was in sorrow
All the way from shore to shore.

Armies passing from the cities
And along the country ways,
Marching forth in solid column
Home and country all to save.

Lo! the sounds of deadly conflict
Are soon borne upon the breeze,
Ere the birds and blossoms mingle
With the leaves upon the trees;

And the wings of death's dark angel
Spread o'er vale and mountain side

'Till the weeping wife and mother
Almost wished they too had died.

Many homes were rent asunder
And fond hopes were crushed for aye,
'Till all kindred meet together
In a home beyond the sky.

But of all the mortal sorrows
That the human soul could rack
It was this, to get no tidings
Of the one that ne'er came back.

Whether on the field of glory
Or the prisons crowded cell,
No one has yet discovered
The place whereon he fell.

Could he but sank to slumber
On a comrade's loving arm,
And thus cross the placid river
Where the wicked cease to harm,

The kindred at the heart^h-stone
Would give all the world beside
For some satisfying knowledge
As to how their loved one died.

Thus the parent and the widow
Oft have grieved their life away,
Still repining and declining
With a grief they could not stay.

When the years of strife were ended
And the armies home again;
Who could count the many thousands
That were numbered with the slain.

Who could count the many heart aches
That were caused by war's alarms
Through all the years of contest
When our country was in arms.

Credit good to God the Father
And all wickedness to men,
And pray no great rebellion
May e'er visit us again.

* * *

THE PATRIOTIC PICTURE

Come paint me a picture
To hang on the wall
And show to my comrades
Whenever they call.

As noble a group
As ever was seen,
Who would willingly drink
From the same canteen.

And now my good artist
You've got to play fair,
For one from each order
Must surely be there.

Four gray heads must surely
Appear in the space
Each having a very
Conspicuous place,

The Grand Army Man
And the Legion are there,
And two elderly ladies
With silvery hair;

Each of the pair
Are no strangers to grief
The Grand Army Ladies
And Womans Relief.

The fair Daughters too
Those mischievous elves
Who join with the others
Or work by themselves.

And now for our sons
Who are scattered so wide,
We must bring them together
All side by side.

The S. V. Camp
And some in the Guard
The Spanish war vet
And his Army pard;

And our parents
And family of '61
And now our formation
Is only begun.

Our sweethearts and wives
And our children dear
In that same picture
Must all appear.

Another old vet'
Must stand in the row
Who fought on the
Plains of Mexico;

The Regular too,
Who trod o'er the wild

And guarded the
Pioneer's infant child.

And down in the past
We willingly delve
To bring up a face
From the war of '12.

And on down the line
By strict evolution
Another we bring
From the Great Revolution.

I want this grand picture
To be a surprise
Portray every feature
And kind, beaming eyes;

But how shall we group them
And make them appear
With all in the front
And none in the rear.

I cannot arrange them
I give up the job
And leave their position
To country and God.

* * *

THE OLD ARMY SHOE

Good woman I've painted
Your house through and through,
And now if you wish
I will gild the old shoe;

The one in the wardrobe
I saw over there,
As you turn to the left
At the foot of the stair.

Nay, painter, it certainly
Never would do
For strangers to handle
That sacred old shoe;

But I'll take it down
As I often have done,
For it is all I have left
Of my long lost son

My husband was dead
And my innocent boy
Was the pride of my life,
And the height of my joy.

At the call of our country
He proudly marched forth
And down to the front
With the hosts of the North.

A few tender letters
And then all was o'er
I never could hear
Of my boy any more.

But after long months
Of sorrow and pain,
They sent me a package
That came by the train.

I opened the parcel,
Examined it through;

And only could find
The old army shoe.

While scanning it closely
Though I could not tell why;
I read on the sole,
“Dear mother, good-bye.”

He surely is gone,
And 'tis certainly true,
As a last dying token
He sent me his shoe.

My boy was my all
Let him sleep where he will,
There's a void in my heart
That nothing can fill.

And now kind stranger
I see you're in tears,
To think how I've suffered
These many long years;

And now kind lady
Without more ado
I'll add something more
To the tale of the shoe.

'Twas the spring of the year
The beautiful May,
We all were drawn up
In battle array.

Your boy at my left
With myself at his right,
And in that position
We entered the fight.

A minnie ball came
Our ranks whizzing through,
And made the plain mark
On the heel of his shoe.

And yet farther on
'Midst the heat of the fray,
A cannon ball took
His left leg away.

I carried him down
In a valley close by
His blood flowing fast;
I knew he would die.

A keepsake he said
For my mother so true;
But there's nothing to send
Unless it's my shoe.

I handed it to him;
And with hand growing cold
And fast failing strength
He wrote on the sole.

We made him a grave
'Neath a mistletoe bough ,
And marked well the spot,
I could find it there now.

He gave me your address
And whispered it plain;
And I sent the package
That came by the train.

TO THE CAVALRY

A critter soldier came dashing by
And I thought of the days when you and I
Were marching along in the broiling heat,
All weary of limb and aching feet.

We travelled across the burning sand
Or mud and water on every hand;
We wondered that men might have the chance
To wear a pair of "half-soled" pants.

It seemed to us an excellent plan
That horses should march instead of man;
And that is why so many were saved,
While the footman went down to his early grave:

Yet away with the man with memory skilled
Who says no cavalry ever were killed.
In years of struggle and civil strife
Both "foot and horse" gave up their life.

And but a remnant from out the fray
Are able to meet with us here today;
So let them talk of the various ways
They fought and marched in their army days.

All hail to the men that rode o'er the land
And the weary feet that pounded the sand;
"Sand pounders" are here in an equal chance
With the boys who wore the "half-soled" pants.

* * *

OUR COUNTRY'S DEFENDERS

They fought to form a nation true
And built it better than they knew,

And kept it later when the clan
Of British hordes stood man to man.

They never let their honor go
When crossing swords with Mexico,
And in our bloody civil strife,
They pledged anew our nation's life.

They brought our flag without a stain
Home from the war with haughty Spain;
So give to all from first to last
The honor due to every class.

* * *

OUR FALLEN BRAVE

When the graves of our soldiers
Are covered with snow
And the gales of stern winter
Rush furiously by;

The living should think
Of the debt that they owe
For the sacrifice made
By our comrades who die

When spring brings her fragrance
Of buds and of flowers
To sweeten the pleasure
Of swift passing hours.

And picture her landscape
So rich and so gay
We've chosen a time
In the beautiful May,

To weave the bright garlands
From nature's rich store,
And deck the green mounds
From shore unto shore,

Where heroes lie sleeping
In calm, peaceful rest,
With nature's soft coverlet
Spread o'er each breast.

Many are lying
In places unknown
With never a word
Marked on slab or on stone;

But whether in valley
Or mountain side steep,
The feathery songsters
Their vigils will keep;

And each dying autumn
Like a funeral pall,
Spreads her rich leaves
Alike over all.

With proper respect
For the deeds of the brave
Who gave up their lives
Our country to save;

Let us never forget
The lesson they taught ,
And prize every right
Which so dearly was bought.

Let Columbia's children

Have respect for her laws,
And remember the heroes
Who died in her cause.

* * *

WEST LIBERTY

(For Reunion of 35th Iowa at West Liberty Iowa.)

You may cross over mountains and valley so fair
Inhale the sweet breeze of the health-giving air,
And count all the places of beauty you see
The beautiful flowers and fruit on the tree;
But where is the place where comrades may rest
All feel at home and partake of the best?

West Liberty.

The flocks and the crops grow strong in the sun
The husbandman rests when his duty is done;
The good wife and children are better than kings
Because of contentment that happiness brings.
A community busy as bees in a hive
A place where all people must certainly thrive;

West Liberty.

In times when our nation was sorely distressed
And soldiers were wanted to march from the west,
The Old Wapsie Valley was true to the call,
Her sons swelled the ranks of the musket and ball,
And these later years at the bugle refrain
She sent gallant heroes to struggle with Spain.

West Liberty.

It seems as the years in their cycles go round
No spot on this earth will ever be found
With people more willing, faithful and true

To welcome the boys of the Government blue;
No matter whatever from whence we may come
'Tis surely the place we can all feel at home—
West Liberty.

We enjoy with the gents and ladies so fair
A sunshine of pleasure that banisheth care,
And then a grand banquet the best in the land
Prepared by the skill of each delicate hand
Oh! where is the town that such bounty can spread
'Till all the old vets in the city are fed?
West Liberty.

And now when the comrades will travel their ways
They will bring to their mind the pleasantest days,
They ever have spent in any good town
Upon which the old sun has ever looked down;
And now in conclusion 'tis nothing but fair
That God bless its people be ever our prayer,
West Liberty.

* * *

THE WOMAN'S RELIEF CORPS

Of all the good people who meet in the town
Or yet farther out in the country around,
And distribute their blessings on needy and poor
There are none that will equal our womanly corps.

In sickness and sorrow they're always on hand
With never a shirker in that noble band,
But workers who always the idle ignore,
And none but the faithful belong to the Corps.

In planning and doing, I'm sure we can boast

There always some distance ahead of the Post,
On social occasions we yield them the floor
And always submit to the will of the Corps.

Auxiliary—never! we blush with the shame
Of any poor sinner who gave them the name;
For no one is needed to write up their brief;
May God's richest blessing be on our Relief.



FOR DECORATION DAY

Pause awhile where sleep the brave
Strew the garlands o'er each grave,
Place the flag above their head
In the city of the dead.

They served us well and now they lay
Within their tenements of clay;
In peaceful rest and sweetest sleep
The while their silent vigils keep.

God marks the spot and knows it well
Where every single comrade fell,
And when he comes to claim his own
Our loved ones will be gathered home.



A N I N C I D E N T

We had been to the Depot, our friends there to meet
And were drawn up in line by the side of the street,
"Touch elbows" my comrades I heard some one say
While giving command (in a jocular way).

I touched to the left, with a feeling quite plain
And swayed to the right, but a sensible pain
Stole over my frame while led to believe
My elbow touched naught but an empty sleeve.

A story it told of the days of the past
When the smoke of the battle, the sky overcast,
When the heroes of blue were mixed with the gray
And many laid low in the midst of the fray.

The field fraught with carnage and red rivers run
From blush of the morning 'till set of the sun,
And foot horse and rider were closing the space
Where many brave comrades went down in their place.

Those battles are over, peace hovers again
O'er hilltop and valley and mountain and plain;
May our nation be living when rivers are dry
And always be lasting as stars in the sky.

* * *

TO OUR SOLDIER DEAD

We will come to the spot
Where dead comrades lay,
And garland their tombs
In the sunshine of May;

And think of their deeds
Of times that are passed,
And cherish their names
While memory lasts.

R E P L Y

(Reply to Invitation to Regimental Reunion.)

Some paint splendid sketches
To hang on the wall,
But fancy paints pictures
At memory's call;

And mine draws a picture
To please you I ween,
Of welcome sojourners
At old Muscatine.

The "*boys*" are seen gathering
In one by one,
Musicians are beating
Away at the drum

And every true member
Of that little band
Is greeting his comrade
With shake of the hand.

And in the commotion
I plainly can see
There's room for the comrade
Of Company G.

So while you are joining
In that happy throng,
Remember your servant
Is coming along.

THE RECEPTION

A time and place where all can meet
And each their friends and comrades greet,
And live the young days o'er again
Forgetting they are gray-haired men.

Old sisters too, with faded curls
Can quote the time when they were girls,
And yet enjoy this life so brief
Before they join the last relief.

* * *

THE OLD BATTLEFIELD

Where horrors of war
Have been overspread
The calmness of peace
Is reigning instead.

The harvester gathers
His crop in the sun
Where once was the booming
Of cannon and gun.

The lark builds her nest
In the ripening grain
Where the valleys were red
With the blood of the slain.

May the great God of War
With his withering hand
Henceforth keep aloof
From our own native land.

Let our sons and our daughters

Ne'er know the harm
Of the dreadful condition
Of wars dread alarm.

* * *

WASHINGTON

Of all the men e'er known to fame
Who earned themselves a deathless name
And helped to formulate a plan
To give good government to man,
There was Columbia's favorite son
Our own beloved Washington.

We need not ask the sect or creed
Of those who knew their country's need;
He used the force of truth and might
To battle for the cause of right,
And never halted 'till he won
The name of Father Washington.

There never was an act to mar
His honor in his day of war,
And gratitude should never cease
For all he did in time of peace;
Let every land beneath the sun
Revere the name of Washington,

* * *

PUTTING DOWN THE REBELLION

I could not tell whether I'd better enlist
Than try to fight rebels alone wid me fist
Of course I would rather have me own way
And do all the wurruk and have all the pay,

For what was the use of an army of men
If I could do all of the fighting and then
I'd surely put down the Rebellion.

But while I was thinkin' as sure as the fate
Behold all me plans were a little too late;
They said I would have to join into the ranks
And learn all their blatherin bothersome pranks.
They made me believe I'd always feel proud
And have at my back an illegant crowd,
Then I could put down the Rebellion.

They made us all stand in a very straight line
And dressed us in clothes that made us look fine
Then gave us a harness wid buckles and straps
Some little square boxes with buttons and flaps
And said our supplies had only begun
And handed to each a very fine gun
With which to put down the Rebellion.

Then clothes and blankets were put on our back
In spider like fixin' called a knapsack,
Another fine sack that looked rather neat
They said it would hold all we wanted to eat,
Something for drink for every spalpeen
Was hung on his side and called a canteen
And helped to put down the Rebellion.

Now we had to carry this luggage of course
(While all the big bosses could ride on a horse)
And often must carry wherever we went
A nate little cottage they called a pup tent
A knife and a fork, a tin plate and spoon
As sure as me name is John Patrick Muldoon
And I must put down the Rebellion.

Wid cooking arrangements not very complete

They did us quite well when we'd nothing to eat;
Sometimes when in danger provision would lack
We had some queer crackers, they called 'em "*hard tack*"
And some thin and soft almost ready to walk
And surely created abundance of talk.

And helped to prolong the Rebellion.

After we'd sogered some several months
I got the rheumatics, (it came all at once)
It drew up my ankle so tight and so sore
It appeared that it never would walk any more,
They gave me some crutches to hobble around
And said that I surely would never be sound,

Or fit to put down the Rebellion.

Off to a hospital they sent me at last
Because my leg was stiffening fast;
A pompous old doctor with heart very large
Sat down to a table and wrote me discharge,
When out of the army the truth I will tell
I threw down me crutches and walked very well

And that's how I put down the Rebellion.

PATRIOTIC POEMS

(Written during the Spanish-American War.)

COMPANY F, FORTY-NINTH IOWA

When spirit of rancor and haughty disdain
Caused arrogant Spaniards to blow up the Maine
And deal death and danger both near and afar
Our country was saddened with terrible war.

Armies pushed forward with quickening life
And boldly marched onward to enter the strife.
'Midst moving battalions all forming abreast
Behold our young soldiers of Company F.

In camp at Des Moines with uncertain fate
They drill and recruit and anxiously wait;
At last the despatch is sent o'er the lines
To establish a camp in the Florida pines.

At the end of the journey without any pomp
They were ordered to tent in a Jacksonville swamp;
With days hot as fury and nights that were cool
And mosquitoes as big as a Government Mule.

'Mid ponds that were ⁷f⁷thy and pools that were vile
Decay and destruction [^]to every square mile;
The fumes of malaria in each passing breath
Forced soldiers to struggle and wrestle with death.

Death seized on the brow of the youth that was fair
And ended in triumph his suffering there;
And many young martyrs were taken away
Their life going out in the camp where they lay .

With close of the summer of heat and of rain

They struck all their tents and travelled again;
This time at Savannah, their banner unfurled
And all quite agreed they had struck a new world.

The people were loyal, kind hearted, and true
To every good soldier who sported the blue,
Their day of Thanksgiving they'll never forget
The greatest of banquets that ever was set.

But pleasures are short at best as they fly
And soon all our boys bid Savannah good-bye.
They crossed over ocean and threw out the chain,
And rode safe at anchor by wreck of The Maine.

Through filthy Havanna 'twas never a pity
They marched them eight miles quite out of the city;
And now fairly settled on old Cuban soil
They rested awhile from their travel and toil.

With Spaniards and Cubans and strange habitations
They studied the fixtures and mixtures of nations;
And yet after all of this foreign training
Still there was much of the Yankee remaining.

With four months of duty in Cuban domain
The Government orders them homeward again.
Imagine how lively they dance in their shoes
And throw up their hats as they welcome the news.

The band, with the cheering not being outdone
Paraded camp streets to the tune of Sweet Home.
A few days they waited then marched to the shore
Embarked to return to God's Country once more.

Though crowded aboard of a very small ship
In danger of sinking while making the trip,

They breasted the billows for many a mile
Yet landed all safe at the quarantine isle.

All things from the land of our Cuban relation
Must here undergo an intense fumigation,
The process delayed them some five days or more
Before they arrived on Columbia's bright shore.

Some weeks at Savannah and then homeward bound
No happier boys could ever be found;
And conscious of soldierly duties well done
They are welcomed to greetings and pleasures of home.

* * *

TO THE LADIES OF SAVANNAH,
GEORGIA

In dreams of their kindred
And homes far away,
In camp at Savannah
The Seventh Corps lay;

The call of the bugle
Arose on the air,
Interrupting repose
And their visions so fair;

And now of the weather
They anxiously pray,
For all of them knew
It was Thanksgiving day.

Although cloudless skies
The morning deposes
They little can guess
What the evening discloses.

Whatever camp duties

Devolved on the boys,
The did them quite willing
Without any noise.

And not a man winced
Or thought it a pity
To see a great storm
Pouring out of the city.

Tornadoes of turkeys
Were hurled into space,
And cakes, fruits and flowers
Kept up with the pace.

The ladies came out
And showed they were able
To settle the storm
Just over each table.

A far better feast
Was provided for all
Then ever was spread
In Delmonico's hall.

And those who write history
This truth may convey
Fifteen thousand soldiers
Were conquered that day.

The Forty-ninth Iowa
Shared in the fray;
Our brave Company F
Were "captured" they say:

Yet we here at home
Ever thankful will be

To the kind hearted people
'Way down by the sea.

Those patriot ladies
So loyal and true
Will ne'er be forgotten
By soldiers in blue.

You boast of the power
Of sword and of pen,
But kindness of women
Will conquer the men.

* * *

THE VACANT ROOM OF OUR SOLDIER BOY

There is a room in the house that is silent and tenantless
Just up to the right at the end of the hall,
The occupant left us one April spring morning
With the first to respond to his country's call.

His clothes neatly brushed still hang in the closet
Hats, caps and cuffs as he left them there,
Papers, letters, small boxes with trinkets,
And even the gloves he used to wear.

The books and the furniture too are the same
The bed and the chair so vacant withal;
There's never a sound or a tread of his footstep
Nor any response to the morning call.

The rays of the morning peep in at the casement
And fall on the downy pillow so white,
And leaves it the same when the evening sunset
Sinks to repose in the silence of night.

We long to see shoes and collar and necktie
Or books and papers lying about
The usual swing of the door on its hinges
Or an echoing sound passing in and out.

Will he return in the beautiful spring time?
Or will he come when the May flowers bloom,
And help to deposit the sweetest garlands
Over death stricken comrades silent tomb.

Let it be in the evening twilight
Let it be in the morning or noon,
We shall all be anxiously waiting
To welcome our gallant soldier home.

* * *

P A T H E T I C R E P L Y T O T H E "S I L E N T R O O M"

(By Ned Henderson, Savannah, Ga.)

Ken you the room that is silent at present?
Well open it! air it! and furbish up things!
For the tenant will home be, some pleasant May morning
On seagirt Dunfuskie, he now Home Again sings.

He's even now at the doors of Savannah;
Get the neatly brushed clothes laid out to his hand,
The hat, and the cuffs, and other adornments,
That are dear to the heart of the youth of our land;

Sadly he'll need them on arrival at Tipton
After skirmishing with the quarantine men;
They'll fumigate, suffocate, everything on him
He'll need clothes after passing through the "fumigate
den."

Grieve not, at the non response to your calling,
He's busy now answering calls by the sea,
Though much he'd prefer to answer your hailing
He's constrained now to answer at dawn reveille.

Will he come in the spring time your doubtfully query
Yes, dear ones; he'll embrace you in a few weeks at most,
Have the fatted calf killed, and dress chickens and
turkeys;
But say! keep can beef out of his sight, even should it
be roast.

* * *

O U R F L A G

The flag of our fathers
Is worthy our care
As the grandest of banners
Unfurled to the air,

Since the same starry emblem
Decended to us
Let no jealous eye
See it trail in the dust.

No matter what happens
We always shall hope
Columbia's children
Will keep it afloat.

PROMISCUOUS POEMS

* * *

THE PIONEERS

When God in his wisdom
Made forest and plain
The river, the lake,
And the treacherous main,

To fully complete
His original plan,
Took dust of the earth
And created a man,

And placed him alone
In garden and bowers,
Then sent a companion
To care for the flowers;

But this happy couple
Without a good cause,
Disobeyed one command
In regard to the laws.

Then by their transgression
Were soon dispossessed
And packing their things
Started out for the West.

And so it has been
With the children of men;
Each in their turn
Moving westward again;

Then crossing old ocean
With daring and zeal,
They sought a new empire,
And there a new field.

They paused as they touched
On the pebbly strand
And offered up thanks
For the beautiful land.

But soon their good children,
Adventurous, free
Extended their settlements
Far from the sea.

The next generation
Ne'er counted it loss,
Great mountains and rivers
To travel across,

And build up their homes
From Ohio's broad tide
To the great Northern lakes
Extending so wide.

Then with fast fleeting years
A generation at best,
There came the old story
"We must strike for the west."

For the pride of the west
In the distance was seen,
Like a wide spreading meadow
All covered with green;

And the "Father of Waters"
Could never run dry

'Till the last pioneer
Reached the "Sweet Bye and Bye."

The homes of first settlers
Somehow it would seem
Were built near the forest
Or swift running stream;

But to those who came later
The vision appeared
'Twas easier farming
Where land was all cleared.

And now my kind friends
While the thread I pursue
I have come to the time
I am speaking of you.

Having crossed the great river
You came to a stand
And staked off your claim
In the "*Beautiful Land*."

With much to encounter
And much to fulfill,
A resolute purpose
And sturdy good will.

You battled with tempest
And fever and flood,
And oft in your travels
Were stuck in the mud.

But keeping your courage
You always allowed
Behind the dark curtain
There shone a "bright cloud."

'Twould take many volumes
To fill up the years,
Your joys and your sorrows
Your smiles and your tears.

Your struggles and hardships
And their recompense,
Were all wisely managed
By good common sense.

The while you were toiling
Both early and late
You laid the foundation
And built up a state.

A state none the better
Was ever possessed
By any good people
Who live in the west.

You leave to your children
A legacy grand
We hope will be cherished
With reverent hand.

You'll soon reach the river
Which many have crossed,
And ne'er may your bark
By the tempest be tossed;

But land you all safe
On the furthestmost shore,
To answer the roll
Of the Pioneer Corps.

FOR MY SISTER'S GOLDEN WEDDING

Away down in the shadowy distance
Of the bright days that are past and gone
There is many a fond remembrance
It is pleasant to linger upon.

When hopes beat high in your bosoms
And you thought you had nothing to fear,
That the fragrant breath of the roses
Would continue throughout the year.

One pleasant day in the autumn
Before chill of the wintry weather
In heart and hand united
You started life's journey together.

No journey ever so pleasant
But has trials along the way
And many a night of darkness
Is followed by beautiful day.

You have often thought of your children
While they were so long away,
But now their pattering footsteps
Are with you again today.

Your hearts beat high with the pleasure
Of having them home again
They are still those self-same children
Only grown to be women and men.

They think of your years together,
And none of them spent in vain,
Your constant faith in each other,
A solace for every pain.

Though Fifty years together
And travelling down the slope,
That your years may yet be many,
We trust with a fervent hope:

And when you have crossed the river
And safe on the other shore,
May that life be always sunshine,
And happy for evermore.

✱ * ✱

APPEAL OF THE OLD BELL TO FORMER MEMBERS OF TIPTON UNION SCHOOL

Come gather round ye schoolmates gray
And let us spend a holiday
Come out into the open air
And banish every earthly care
Let joyful greeting here abound
And music reign with sweetest sound
And every time the chorus swell
By ringing out the *old school bell*.

Your feet were lithe and glib my tongue
In days when you and I were young;
I reigned as with a roval crown,
But time decreed I "must come down;"
Since then I've lived in sad disgrace
Shut up in some secluded place;
But now am out to hear you tell
How you revere your *old school bell*.

Your steps have wandered far I ween
Since days you played upon the green;

A few have lingered here and wait
And open out the wicket gate
In welcome to each heart and soul
That come and answer to the roll
But many more 'tis sad to tell
Will never answe to *the bell*.

Their graves are scattered far and wide
From prairie land to ocean tide
A number of that noble band
Lost life and limb in Southern land,
But few out of the Forty told
Who answered to the muster roll,
Are left their hardships here to tell
And answer to their *old school bell*.

Now teachers, scholars, all that will
Have parts allotted to fulfill,
Each of you have some pleasant home
While I am left to live alone.
Now don't you think it would be fair
In my old age to give me care,
And let no stranger ever tell
You have no home for Your Old Bell.

* * *

FOR MCKINLEY CAMPAIGN

The hosts that gather 'round about
Have rent the air with joyful shout
Let every form be palsied, dead
Who on fair freedom's banner tread.

Let fiendish Anarchism rife
No more renew its lease of life,

Let labor bring its just reward
And howling demagogues ignored.

Who teach the worthless money craze
Throughout the coming autumn days,
Let every tongue the truth impart
And swell with pride the nation's heart.

Protection's aim and noble cause
Shall be sustained by wholesome laws.
Let Union sailors motto be
America on every sea.

Ring out the shout with loud acclaim
From Western Sea to Coast of Maine;
While from the Gulf an echo flies
Clear out across the Northern skies.

Let every voice unite as one
And shout for freedom's loyal son,
McKinley shall our leader be
And crown our glorious victory.

* * *

A B E L I N C O L N

Who argued well for freedom's cause
And advocated better laws
To stay the tyrant's swelling powers
That grappled with this land of ours
And crushed the poor man and the slave
With an increasing tidal wave?

Abe Lincoln.

Who issued forth the grand decree

All colored folks should hence be free
From ocean unto ocean's wave
No banner float above a slave
And all our nation must agree
For equal rights and liberty?
Abe Lincoln.

* * *

HUMOROUS PARODY ON WASHINGTON

(Old School book pictures his hatchet like an ax.)

While Washington was very young
And while his nerves were yet unstrung,
He grasped his ax, its blade to try
And tried it on a tree near by.

He chopped away with might and main
Until the tree was lowly lain;
To ply the ax was royal fun
Until he thought what he had done.

And as the tear sprang to his eye
He sobbed good bye to cherry pie;
And left the spot a wiser boy
While sadness took the place of joy.

The father passed along the way
To where the boy had been at play,
And when he saw what had been done
He went and called his favorite son;

“My boy” he said, you plainly see
Some one has cut that splendid tree,”

The lad replied "I cannot lie"
"You bought that ax for me to try."

* * *

T O A S T

"Here's to the years that are stretching ahead
To the days that are blithsome and gay,
May the joys of the old be the joys of the new
And the sorrows fade gently away."

R E S P O N S E

Like a soft gentle breeze
Springing up from the past
And dispelling the gloom
From a sky overcast,

So the thoughts of the days
That forever have fled,
Give strength to our courage
And lead us ahead.

May naught but the sunshine
Appear to our view
While life's pleasant valley
We're travelling through

May neither the prophet
The seer nor the sage
Discourage the thoughts
Of a happy old age.

WRITTEN FOR BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

While shifting along
Through this valley of sorrow,
Corn meal or brown coffee
Are easy to borrow;

And nuggets of wisdom
You freely dispense
By using quotations
At others expense.

Corn meal or brown coffee
Are easily earned
But borrowed quotations
Are seldom returned.

* * *

FOR THE AGED

An act, a word to cheer us on
O'er life's tempestuous seas,
Are cherished from the days agone
As pleasant memories.

To grasp the hand and hear the voice
Still filled with joyful praise
Brings back our youth and aids our strength
In our declining days.

* * *

FOR LEAP YEAR

The Recording Angel
Has his busy days,

And don't always take note
Of the different ways,

That humanity's history
Often discloses
Of the courage or doubt
Of the one who proposes;

Yet it makes little odds
In the usual plan,
Whether man asks the woman
Or woman the man.

* * *

C H R I S T M A S

Hail Christmas day of all the year
We gladly know you're drawing near
And while it brings good lessons all
To young and old and great and small,

This day of all to us was given
To bring us all more near to Heaven:
"Peace on earth, good will to men"
And truth and justice ever reign.



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